

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection and the allowance of all claims now pending in the above-identified patent application (*i.e.*, Claims 11, 12 and 15-17) are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

At the outset, it should be recognized that the present invention, as now claimed, provides a hose reel assembly, which includes a hose reel spool having a riser there-through for providing a fluid path in combination with the unitary, or upright, support member of the invention. The upright support member, as recited in Applicants' claims, includes a laterally extending motor and gearbox and hub to which the hose reel spool is connectable on only one side of the hub via a plurality of studs and is securable to the one side of the hub with only a single lug nut for each stud of the plurality of studs – each stud having a lug nut on only one end of each stud – with an integrated frame housing being provided for the upright support member and the hose reel spool.

The present invention, as now claimed and in sharp contrast to the prior art, allows for loads on the hub of the reel assembly to be taken up, or supported by, the upright support member, which prevents such loads from being transmitted to the bearings of the drive unit, thereby increasing the lifespan of the gearbox bearings and related components. This benefit of the present invention is in addition to the attendant benefits of using an automotive hub to which the hose reel spool is connected on only one side of the hub via a plurality of studs for ready placement and removal for needed servicing.

As will be explained in greater detail hereinafter, nowhere in the prior art is such a novel and efficient hose reel assembly, which includes a laterally extending motor and gearbox and hub, to which said hose reel spool is connectable on only one side of the hub via a plurality of studs and securable to the one side of the hub with only a single lug nut for each stud of the plurality of studs with each stud having a lug nut on only one end of each stud for ready placement and removal for servicing, and in which loads on the hub of the reel assembly are taken up, or supported by, the upright support member, which prevents such loads from being transmitted to the bearings of the drive unit, thereby increasing the lifespan of the gearbox bearings and related components, either disclosed or suggested.

By the present amendments, Applicants have amended independent Claim 11 (and all remaining claims via dependency) to now specify that --said hose reel spool [is] removable from said hub for servicing--, which finds subject matter support in Applicants' *Specification* at Page 4, lines 8 – 13. Further, independent Claim 11 also been amended to now recite that --loads of said hub [are] taken up, or supported, by said upright support member and [are] not transmitted to bearings of a drive unit--, which is a feature of the present invention described in Applicants' *Specification* at Page 5, lines 1 – 4.

Turning now, in detail, to an analysis of the Examiner's prior art rejection of Applicants' claims, in the fourth Office Action the Examiner has withdrawn the earlier-issued grounds for rejection and has now rejected independent Claim 11 (and all pending

dependent Claims 12 and 15-17) as being obvious, pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a), over Palm, U.S. Patent No. 2,496,489. It is the Examiner's contention that Palm discloses a hose reel with a single-sided support (18), as shown in FIG. 1, which includes a hydraulic motor and planetary, torque multiplying, gearing and a hub (66) by which a reel spool (12) is mounted by threaded fasteners (68). It is the Examiner's position that a speed controller is an inherent feature of the hose reel disclosed by Palm, since the speed of the reel must invariably be controlled in some manner. The Examiner concedes that Palm does not teach the use of studs, as Applicants claim, but that using studs, such as for automotive wheels, are well known threaded fasteners for attaching elements to hubs. The Examiner has therefore concluded that it would have been obvious to have used studs to attach the spool of Palm to the hub in place of bolts (68), thereby arriving at that being claimed by Applicants.

In reply to the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. §103(a) obviousness rejection applying Palm, a detailed analysis of the applied citation finds that the reel in Palm "is secured to the shaft 16 by a hub 66 to the end plate 60 by a plurality of bolts 68." (*See*, Palm at Col. 3, lines 64 – 66) It is respectfully contended that there is no indication, teaching or suggestion in Palm that the "bolts" are threaded fasteners which are intended to be readily removable – or removable at all! – without, of course, damaging the hose reel taught by Palm. Applicants' claims, as now most broadly recited in independent Claim 11, includes the limitation that the hose reel spool is to be removable from the hub for servicing. Palm does not disclose such a limitation and the express usage of bolt for securing the reel can be viewed as teaching against the ready replacement of the bolts (68) in Palm with a

removable threaded fastening element. Stated differently, the use of studs by Applicants is not simply a matter of design choice, but has a practical, functional benefit that is neither taught nor hinted at by Palm.

Additionally, Applicants' claims now include the limitation that the --loads of said hub [are] taken up, or supported, by said upright support member and [are] not transmitted to bearings of a drive unit--. As explained in Applicants' *Specification* at Page 5, lines 1 – 4, hose reels generally known to the prior art rely on the bearing assembly within the drive unit to support the spool, whereas the hub loads in the claimed hose reel assembly are taken up, or supported by, the upright support member and are not transmitted to the bearings of the drive unit, thereby increasing the life of the gear box bearings and components. The applied prior art of Palm does not teach such a feature in connection with the hose reel disclosed therein, nor can it be said to be inherent in Palm or hose reels generally, inasmuch as the prior art has long relied upon the bearing assembly within the drive unit to support the reel spool.

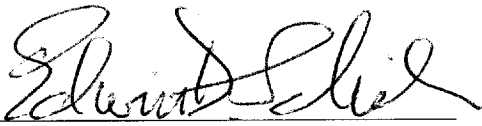
In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully contended that Claims 11, 12 and 15-17, as now amended, cannot reasonably be viewed as being obvious over Palm and, consequently, withdrawal of the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. 103(a) obviousness rejection of the fourth Office Action is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully contended that all claims now pending in the above-identified patent application (*i.e.*, Claims 11, 12 and 15-17) recite a novel and efficient hose reel assembly, which includes a laterally extending motor and gearbox

and hub, to which said hose reel spool is connectable on only one side of the hub via a plurality of studs and securable to the one side of the hub with only a single lug nut for each stud of the plurality of studs with each stud having a lug nut on only one end of each stud for ready placement and removal for servicing, and in which loads on the hub of the reel assembly are taken up, or supported by, the upright support member, which prevents such loads from being transmitted to the bearings of the drive unit, thereby increasing the lifespan of the gearbox bearings and related components, which is patentably distinguishable over the prior art. Accordingly, withdrawal of the outstanding rejection and the allowance of all claims now pending are respectfully requested and earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enc.: 1. Petition for Three-Month Extension of Time for Response; and,
2. EFT for \$555.00 (Three-Month Extension Fee).

The Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge the Deposit Account of Applicant's Attorney (*Account No. 19-0450*) for any fees or costs pertaining to the prosecution of the above-identified patent application, but which have not otherwise been provided for.